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Message Text

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73
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-07 EUR-12 /076 W
---------- 078780
P R 221800Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY LIMA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1919
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 8644

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CU, PE
SUBJECT: UPI DESPATCH ON CUBANS IN PERU

REF: STATE 233722

1. AT HIS REQUEST, CHILEAN AMBASSADOR BULNES CALLED ON ME SEPTEMBER 20. HE REFERRED TO THE UPI STORY BASED ON THE REPORT FROM THE DEFENSE AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS DAILY ALLEGING THE ENTRY INTO PERU VIA PANAMA OF 3500 CUBANS TO SUPPORT PERU AGAINST CHILE.

2. BULNES SAID THAT ACCORDING TO A CABLE HE HAD RECEIVED FROM SANTIAGO, THIS ARTICLE WAS BASED ON INFORMATION FROM A WITNESS WHO CLAIMED HE TWICE SAW SOVIET AIRCRAFT ABOARD SOVIET MERCHANT VESSELS IN PORTS IN PANAMA AND FROM ANOTHER REPORT ABOUT PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING NEGROES SPOTTED IN PANAMA. BY AND LARGE BULNES WAS HIGHLY SKEPTICAL OF THESE REPORTS AND THE CONCLUSIONS EVIDENTLY DRAWN FROM THEM. FOR EXAMPLE, A PORTUGUESE-SPEAKING NEGRO COULD WELL HAVE BEEN A BRAZILIAN AS WELL AS AN ANGOLAN.

3. BULNES WAS SHOCKED BY THE WAY SANTIAGO NEWSPAPERS HAD BLOWN UP THE UPI ITEM, AND SAID HE HAD WRITTEN TO HIS FRIEND LA FONTANE OF THE MERCURIO AND ALSO TO LA TERCERA ASKING THEM TO TREAT NEWS AFFECTING CHILE'S RELATIONS WITH PERU IN A LESS SENSATIONAL MANNER.
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HE WAS ALSO IN TOUCH WITH HIS FOREIGN OFFICE IN THIS REGARD, AND

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WAS EVEN CONTEMPLATING A QUICK TRIP TO SANTIAGO TO EMPHASIZE THIS POINT.

4. BULNES ADDED THAT SINCE HIS ARRIVAL HERE BOTH HE AND HIS COUNTRY HAD BEEN TREATED VERY WELL BY THE GOP AND THE PRESS AND THAT HE HAD BEEN ASSURED BY GENERAL VILLALOBOS, PERU'S OVERSEER OF COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA, THAT UNFAVORABLE TREATMENT OF CHILE AND THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BY THE PERUVIAN MEDIA WOULD NOT BE PERMITTED. HE ADDED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAD RECENTLY REACHED AGREEMENT WITH THE GOP TO ESTABLISH A BILATERAL COMMISSION TO DEAL WITH ANY PROBLEMS OR FRICTIONS THAT MIGHT ARISE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. COMMISSION IS SIMILAR TO BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS CHILE HAS WITH ARGENTINA AND BOLIVIA. BULNES EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT THROUGH THESE AND OTHER EFFORTS RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES COULD BE KEPT ON AN EVEN KEEL. FOR THIS REASON HE FELT STRONGLY THAT THE SANTIAGO PRESS SHOULD ALSO BE CONVINCED TO EXERCISE RESTRAINT IN ITS REPORTING OF PERUVIAN DEVELOPMENTS. HE EXPRESSED HIS BELIEF THAT MUCH OF THE EXAGGERATED REPORTING CONCERNING BOTH COUNTRIES WAS THE THE RESULT OF A COORDINATED MARXIST-INSPIRED CAMPAIGN TO FORCE CHILE TO SPEND HEAVILY ON ARMAMENTS AND THUS IMPEDE ITS ECONOMIC RECOVERY EFFORTS.
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